In the Name of Allah,
the All-beneficent, the All-merciful

قال الله تعالى:

﴿إِنَّمَا يُرِيدُ ٱللَّهُ لِيُذۡهِبَ عَنكُمُ ٱلرِّجۡسَ أَهۡلَ ٱلۡبَيۡتِ وَيُطَهِّرَكُمۡ تَطۡهِيرًا﴾

Indeed Allah desires to repel all impurity from you, O People of the Household, and purify you with a thorough purification.

(*Sūrat al-Aḥzāb* 33:33).

Prophetic traditions mentioned in both in Sunnī and Shī'ah authoritative reference books of *hadīth* and *tafsīr* (exegesis of the Qur'an) have confirmed that this holy verse was revealed to exclusively refer to the People of the Cloak [*ahl al-kisā'*], viz. Muhammad, 'Alī, Fāṭimah, al-Hasan, and al-Husayn (as) as the *Ahl al-Bayt* (People of the Ahl al-Bayt).

For instance, refer to the following references:

Sunnī

Ahmad ibn Hanbal (d.241/855), *al-Musnad*, 1:231; 4:107; 6:292, 304; *Ṣahīh Muslim* (d.261/874), 7:130; al-Tirmidhī (d.279/892), *Sunan*, 5:361 et al.; al-Dūlābī (d.310/922), *al-Dhuriyyah al-Ṭāhirah al-Nabawiyyah*, p.108; al-Nasā'ī (d.303/915), *al-Sunan al-Kubrā*, 5:108; 113; al-Hakim al-Nayshābūrī (d.405/1014), *al-Mustadrak 'ala' al-Ṣahīhayn*, 2:416, 3:133, 146-147; al-Zarkashī (d.794/1391), *al-Burhān*, p.197; Ibn Hajar al-'Asqalānī (d.852/1448), *Fath al-Barī Sharh Ṣahīh al-Bukhārī*, 7:104.

Shī'ah

al-Kulaynī (d.328/939), *Uṣūl al-Kāfī*, 1:287; Ibn Babawayh (d.329/940), *al-Imamah wa al-Tabṣīrah*, p.47, *hadīth* 29; al-Maghribī (d.363/973), *Da'ā'im al-Islām*, pp.35, 37; al-Saduq (d.381/991), *al-Khiṣāl*, pp.403, 550; al-Ṭūsī (d.460/1067), *al-Amalī*, *hadīth* 438, 482, 783.

For more details, refer to the exegesis of the holy verse recorded in the following books of *tafsīr*: al-Jassās (d.370/980), *Ahkām al-Qur'an*; al-Wāhidī (d.468/1075), *Asbāb al-Nuzūl*; Ibn al-Jawzī (d.597/1200), *Zād al-Masīr*; al-Qurṭubī (d. 671/1272), *al-Jāmi' li-Ahkām al-Qur'an*; Ibn Kathīr (d.774/1372), *Tafsīr*; al-Tha'labī (d.825/1421), *Tafsīr*; al-Ṭabarī (d.875/1470), *Tafsīr*; al-Suyūṭī (d.911/1505), *al-Durr al-Manthūr*; al-Shawkānī (d.1250/1834), *Fath al-Qadīr*; al-'Ayyāshī (d.320/932), *Tafsīr*; al-Qummī (d.329/940), *Tafsīr*; Furt al-Kūfī (d.352/963), *Tafsīr* at the margin of the exegesis of *Sūrat al-Nisā'* verse 59; al-Ṭabarsī (d.560/1164), *Majma' al-Bayān*, as well as many other sources.

AL-GHADIR

قال رسول الله ﷺ:

إِنِّي تَارِكٌ فِيكُمُ الثَّقَلَيْنِ: كِتَابَ اللهِ وَعِتْرَتِي أَهْلَ بَيْتِي، مَا إِنْ تَمَسَّكْتُمْ بِهِمَا لَنْ تَضِلُّوا بَعْدِي أَبَداً، وَإِنَّهُمَا لَنْ يَفْتَرِقَا حَتَّى يَرِدَا عَلَيَّ الْحَوْضَ.

The Messenger of Allah (ṣ) said:

"Verily, I am leaving among you two weighty things [*thaqalayn*]: The Book of Allah and my progeny [*'itrat*], the members of my Household [*Ahl al-Bayt*]. If you hold fast to them, you shall never go astray. These two will never separate from each other until they meet me at the Pond [*ḥawḍ*] (of *Kawthar*)."

Some references:

- Al-Ḥākim al-Naysābūrī, *Al-Mustadrak 'alā al-Ṣaḥīḥayn* (Beirut), vol. 3, pp. 109-110, 148, 533
- Muslim, *Al-Ṣaḥīḥ*, (English translation), book 31, *hadīth*s 5920-3
- Al-Tirmidhī, *Al-Ṣaḥīḥ*, vol. 5, pp. 621-2, *hadīth*s 3786, 3788; vol. 2, p. 219
- Al-Nassā'ī, *Khaṣā'iṣ 'Alī ibn Abī Ṭālib*, *hadīth* 79
- Aḥmad ibn Ḥanbal, *Al-Musnad*, vol. 3, pp. 14, 17, 26; vol. 3, pp. 26, 59; vol. 4, p. 371; vol. 5, pp. 181-182, 189-190
- Ibn al-Athīr, *Jāmi' al-Uṣūl*, vol. 1, p. 277
- Ibn Kathīr, *Al-Bidāyah wa al-Nihāyah*, vol. 5, p. 209
- Ibn Kathīr, *Tafsīr al-Qur'ān al-'Aẓīm* , vol. 6, p. 199
- Naṣīr al-Dīn al-Albānī, *Silsilat al-Aḥādīth al-Ṣaḥīḥah* (Kuwait: Al-Dār al-Salafiyyah), vol. 4, pp. 355-358

Al-Ghadir

The Ahl al-Bayt (‘a) World Assembly

& Ayub Hairi

Translated by:

Badr Shahin

Cultural Affairs Department
The Ahl al-Bayt (‘a) World Assembly

حائری، ایوب، ۱۳۴۴ - ———— Hairi, Ayub
الغدیر. انگلیسی.

Al- Ghadir\ Author: **Ayub Hairi; Project supervisor: Translation Unit, Cultural Affairs Department Ahl al-Bayt (‘a) World Assembly ; Translator: Badr Shahin .- Qum:**
The Ahl al-Bayt (‘a) World Assembly , 2016. 63P.
ISBN: 978-964-529-750-1

فهرستویسی بر اساس اطلاعات فیپا.

علی‌بن ابی‌طالب (ع) ، امام اول، ۲۳ قبل از هجرت - ۴۰ق -- اثبات خلافت.
۲. غدیر خم. ۳. غدیر خم – احادیث. الف. شاهین ،بدر، مترجم.
ب . مجمع جهانی اهل بیت (ع). اداره ترجمه. ج. الغدیر. انگلیسی. د. عنوان.
۴۵۲/۲۹۷ Bp۲۲۳/۵۴/ح۱۶غ ۴۰۴۹۵۲ ۱۳۹۴

AL-GHADIR
Author: The Ahl al-Bayt (‘a) World Assembly and Muhammad ‘Idan Al-‘Ibadi
Project supervisor: Translation Unit, Cultural Affairs Department, the Ahl al-Bayt (‘a) World Assembly (ABWA)
Translator: Badr Shahin
Editor: Iffat Shah
Proofreader: Muhammad Mahdi Baghy
First Printing: 2016
Printed by: Khatam al-Anbia
Copies: 500
ISBN: 978-964-529-750-1
The Ahl al-Bayt (‘a) World Assembly (ABWA)
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Alley No. 6, Jumhuri Blvd., Qum, Iran,
Tel: 0098-25-32131221
No. 228, Keshavarz Blvd., Tehran, Iran,
Tel: 0098-21-88970171
www.ahl-ul-bayt.org www.abwa_cd.com
info@ahl-ul-bayt.org www.abna.ir

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PREFACE

The invaluable legacy of the Household [*Ahl al-Bayt*] of the Prophet (may peace be upon them all), as preserved by their followers, is a comprehensive school of thought that embraces all branches of Islamic knowledge. This school has produced many brilliant scholars who have drawn inspiration from this rich and pure resource. It has provided the Muslim *ummah* with many scholars whom, following in the footsteps of Imāms of the Prophet's Household (*'a*), have done their best to clear up the doubts raised by various creeds and currents within and without Muslim society and to answer their questions. Throughout the past centuries, they have given well-reasoned answers and clarifications concerning these questions and doubts.

To meet the responsibilities assigned to it, the Ahl al-Bayt World Assembly (ABWA) has embarked on a defense of the sanctity of the Islamic message and its verities, often obscured by the partisans of various sects and creeds as well as by currents hostile to Islam. The Assembly follows in the footsteps of the *Ahl al-Bayt* (*'a*) and the disciples of their school of thought in its readiness to confront these challenges and tries to be on the frontline in consonance with the demands of every age.

The arguments contained in the works of the scholars belonging to the School of the *Ahl al-Bayt* (*'a*) are of unique significance. That is because they are based on genuine scholarship and appeal to reason, and avoid prejudice and bias. These arguments address scholars and

thinkers in a manner that appeals to healthy minds and wholesome human nature.

To assist the seekers of truth, the Ahl al-Bayt World Assembly has endeavored to present a new phase of these arguments contained in the studies and translations of the works of contemporary Shī'ah writers and those who have embraced this sublime school of thought through divine blessing.

The Assembly is also engaged in editing and publishing valuable works by leading Shī'ah scholars of earlier ages to assist the seekers of the truth in discovering the truths which the School of the Prophet's Household (*'a*) has offered to the entire world.

The Ahl al-Bayt World Assembly looks forward to benefit from the opinions of the readers and their suggestions and constructive criticism in this area.

We also invite scholars, translators and other institutions to assist us in propagating the genuine Islamic teachings as preached by the Prophet Muḥammad (saw).

We beseech God, the Most High, to accept our humble efforts and to enable us to enhance them under the auspices of Imām al-Mahdī, His vicegerent on the earth (may Allah expedite his advent).

We express our gratitude to our colleagues in Assembly and Mr. Muhammad 'Idan al-'Ibadi the authors and Mr. Badr Shahin the translator of this work, especially the staff of the Translation Office.

Cultural Affairs Department
The Ahl al-Bayt ('a) World Assembly

AL-GHADIR

Each year, the Shi'a celebrate the 18th of Dhu 'l-Hijjah because this day reminds them of the historic proclamation of the Holy Prophet (saw) outlining the form of government that would rule the Muslims after his departure, and naming 'Ali ibn Abi Talib (as) as the man who would lead them and succeed him in this great developmental work.[1]

It is also the day when Divine Revelation declared the completion of the Divine message, immediately after the Holy Prophet's (saw) appointment of 'Ali (as) as the commander of the believers after him (saw). Referring to this completion, this holy verse declared:

﴿ٱلۡيَوۡمَ أَكۡمَلۡتُ لَكُمۡ دِينَكُمۡ وَأَتۡمَمۡتُ عَلَيۡكُمۡ نِعۡمَتِي وَرَضِيتُ لَكُمُ ٱلۡإِسۡلَٰمَ دِينٗا﴾

"This day I have perfected your religion for you, and completed My favor on you, and chosen Islam as a religion for you. (5:3)"[2]

1– This thesis is quoted from a topic entitled *al-Ghadir* and written by the late 'Allamah (i.e. well-versed scholar) Muhammad Mahdi Shams al-Din.

2– In a coming chapter about this holy verse, we will prove that all exegetes of the Holy Qur'an maintain that it was revealed at Ghadir the same day on which the Holy Prophet s(saw) nominated Imam 'Ali (as) as the next leader of the Muslim community.

CONTROVERSIAL QUESTION

Ghadir embodies one of the most controversial issues between the Shi'a and other Muslims; namely, the textual designation of leadership.[1]

The Shi'a believe that the position of leadership after the Holy Prophet (saw) must not be held by anyone except the one designated by the Holy Prophet (saw), while the other Muslims believe that the textual designation to leadership is not a condition upon which the validity of holding this position is contingent. Accordingly, the Shi'a believe that the Holy Prophet (saw) did nominate 'Ali ibn Abi Talib (as) as the next leader, whereas the other Muslims believe that such a text was not issued by the Holy Prophet (saw) at all.

The Shi'a cite many Prophetic texts reported by non-Shi'a reporters which indisputably prove the validity of the Shi'a claims, to which the other Muslims try to give interpretations which divest them of their true meaning.

However, a researcher can review the social and psychological circumstances that surround the topic and deduce an accurate opinion by considering the prepositions used in the text, as well as the historical texts that help shed light on them.

1– The textual designation of leadership means: appointing a certain person whose name is mentioned identifiably in a binding text coming from Almighty Allah either directly (through the Holy Qur'an) or indirectly (through the Holy Prophet [saw]). [*translator*]

PRE-ISLAMIC COMMUNITY

Islam came forth in the midst of an uneducated community subjugated by a tribal system that imposed a very constricted view about questions on the cosmos, existence, and humanity. The economy depended mainly upon robbery as a source of living, and judicature upon augury. The prevailing religion was a coarse and uncivil paganism that failed to provide any sort of creative pleasure for its followers or develop any religious consciousness of purity, sublimity, or clarity. These are some features of the pre-Islamic community.

Consequently, Islam was required to change these people into a nation and prepare them for carrying the message of Islam to all other people. Thus, Islam had to replace the ignorance-based values with new civilized values and reconstruct the culture of this community from its roots.

These two tasks demanded time, since it was not easy for the individuals of this ignorance-based society to acknowledge a new belief as a substitute for their belief. This would inevitably take tens of years, during which the current generation would perish and a new generation having strong faith in the new values arise. Once more, the achievement of this purpose required the existence of a leader who would be required to do the following:

- *Protect the new faith against all types of distortion and misinterpretations*
- *Prevent the old faith from resurfacing*
- *Make the new faith pervade all aspects of life*

Only then would the essential conditions of real change emerge and help a new community to come to existence.

THE PROPHET'S (SAW) RESPONSIBILITY OF DESIGNATING THE LEADER

What would happen if a community would be in the beginning of a great change and the leader would depart without naming any person as the next leader? Would it not mean that the leader had not given careful thought to the religion and its future issues, and the need to protect it against deviation?[1]

One of the basic and indisputable facts is that one who initiates a revolutionary change in a community or a group of people never leaves them without appointing a person as leader to succeed him in his vital mission. Moreover, this is applicable even to shepherds and herdsmen. How then, can it be possible that a nation whose individuals are expected to bring about a worldwide change in all fields of life is left without a leader? How can a reasonable person accept that the Holy Prophet (saw) left his community without designating a person to succeed him in his leading position?

It is reported that 'Abdullah, the son of `Umar ibn al-Khattab, addressed the following words to his father who was on his deathbed:

> It is passed from mouth to mouth that you are not going to name any one to succeed you in this position! If you have a person employed to guard your sheep or camels and he comes to you leaving

1–'Allamah Shams al-Din; *Al-Ghadir,* pp. 4-15.

> the herd without a guide, you will unquestionably judge him as negligent. Of course, the guarding of people is more important than the guarding of camels and sheep. What will you answer Allah the Almighty and All-exalted when you meet Him while you have not designated a person to guide His servants?[1]

Lady 'A'ishah is likewise reported to have said these words to 'Abdullah, the son of `Umar ibn al-Khattab:

> Listen, son! Convey my greetings to your father and advise him, on my behalf, not to leave the community of (Prophet) Muhammad without a guide; rather, he must designate the next leader. Furthermore, advise him on my behalf not to leave these people unprotected after him, for if he does so, I fear they will fall into seditious matters.[2]

When Mu'awiyah entrusted his son Yazid with the Umayyad caliphate, he, justified it, saying,

> "I am too afraid to leave the community of Muhammad like shepherdless sheep after me."[3]

The Holy Prophet (saw) was always accustomed not to leave

1– Muhibb al-Din al-Tabari, *al-adRiyad al-dNadirah* 2:353, published by Dar al-Nidwah al-Jadidah Publishers -Beirut; *Sunan al-Bayhaqi* 8:149, published by Dar al-Ma`rifah Publishers - Beirut; Abu Na`im, *Hilyat al-Awliya'* 1:44, published by Dar al-Fikr Publishers.

2– Ibn Qutaybah, *al-Imamah wa'l-Siyasah* 1:23.

3– *Tarikh al-Tabari* 3:154, published by: `Izz al-Din Publishers; Ibn Qutaybah, *al-Imamah wa'l-Siyasah* 1:184, published by al-Sharif al-Radi Publishers.

Medina, his center, without assigning someone to govern and manage its affairs. This fact has been mentioned in all the biographies of the Holy Prophet (saw). For instance, Ibn Hisham has mentioned in his reference book, entitled; al-Sirah al-Nabawiyyah, the names of twenty-four men whom the Holy Prophet (saw) had appointed to rule al-Madinah during his campaigns and military expeditions.[1]

Thus, the Holy Prophet (saw) was extremely careful lest his community be afflicted by deviation. Declaring this fact, the Holy Qur'an reads:

﴿لَقَدْ جَآءَكُمْ رَسُولٌ مِّنْ أَنفُسِكُمْ عَزِيزٌ عَلَيْهِ مَا عَنِتُّمْ حَرِيصٌ عَلَيْكُم بِٱلْمُؤْمِنِينَ رَءُوفٌ رَّحِيمٌ﴾

> *"Certainly, a Messenger has come to you from among yourselves; grievous to him is your falling into distress, excessively solicitous respecting you; to the believers he is compassionate and merciful. (9:128)"*

This holy Qur'anic verse gives a clear-cut definition of the personality of the Holy Prophet (saw), highlighting the fact that he is compassionate and sympathetic towards his nation. Is it then reasonable to believe that the Holy Prophet (saw), who is the center of knowledge, neglects designating a person to succeed him as the leader after him?

It is ironic that narrators and historians have reported the

1– Rida Kardan, *al-Imamah wa `Ismat al-A'immah fi al-Qur'an*, pp.16-20.

Holy Prophet (saw) enunciating thirty-five laws and etiquettes appertaining to a trivial issue like toileting, but when the issue of Imam 'Ali's (as) succession to the Holy Prophet (saw) is discussed, they claim that the Holy Prophet (saw) did not nominate any person to be the next leader of the Muslim community!

The Imamiyyah Shi'a believe that the Holy Prophet (saw) nominated the person who would lead the Muslim community after him on many occasions, one of which was the famous incident known as Ghadir Khumm.

An explanatory representation of this event follows:

PREAMBLE TO GHADIR

Islam is a global religion with a body of laws that govern man's essential needs. The leadership of the Muslim community was one of the specific issues to which the Holy Prophet (saw) referred very frequently as long as he was alive. This eternal code of laws could not neglect an important issue like the supreme leadership of the Muslim community after the Holy Prophet (saw) and assign it to serendipities, whims, and desires, or the contradictory opinions, and personal inferences of the Companions.[1] This would certainly lead to discrepancy, disunion, and the general collapse of the Islamic state.

It is, therefore, impossible that the Messenger, who sealed the progress of the past Messengers of God, would provide an everlasting code of law and neglect this most significant issue. The Holy Prophet (saw) did nominate a person to undertake the responsibility of leading the Muslim community after him, which was very natural, required, and expected by all Muslims.

The following questions then need answers:

- Who was the person designated by the Holy Prophet (saw) to succeed him as the leader of the Muslim community?
- When did the Holy Prophet (saw) designate such a person to this position?

1– *Sahabah*; companions of the Holy Prophet.

- In what way did the Holy Prophet (saw) designate such a person to this position?

The Ahl al-Bayt (as) and their followers believe that the supreme leadership of the Muslim nation and the succession of the Holy Prophet (saw) is divinely ordained, and must be conveyed by the Holy Prophet (saw) through a text issued by him after receiving a direct order from God Almighty. Thus, God Almighty and the Holy Prophet (saw) never relegated this decision to a gathering from which the majority of Emigrants[1]were absent, while those present were certain persons who feared letting the other party precede them…

In fact, God Almighty and the Holy Prophet (saw) chose the best individual of the Muslim community to be the next leader. Confirming this fact, the Holy Prophet (saw) often declared the Imamate (i.e. leadership) of this individual on many occasions, showing that he would be the next leader of the nation. Since the first days of his promulgation for Islam, the Holy Prophet (saw) did not stop declaring the fact that this person would be his successor. Moreover, he paved the way for this matter in both Mecca and Medina, beginning with the Day of Warning and ending with his journey back from his Farewell Pilgrimage. A special and formal designation of this person to succeed the Holy Prophet (saw) as the next leader was declared on the 18th of Dhu 'l-Hijjah 10/16 March 632. This formal declaration came after the Holy

1– *Muhajirun*; the early Muslims of Mecca who fled from their homeland into Medina for fear of the persecutions of the Meccan polytheists.

Prophet (saw) had received a clear-cut warning from God Almighty to designate the person who would succeed him as the leader of the nation. Even after that and up to the last hours of his blessed lifetime, the Holy Prophet (saw) did not stop repeating this Divinely-commissioned designation.

The other party, who laid hold of leadership after the Holy Prophet (saw) claim that caliphate was never a Divinely-decided position nor any formal order (from God the Almighty or the Holy Prophet (saw)) needed about it. Rather, the Muslims, even if they are few in number, can decide on the person holding this position and their decision will have to be accepted.

Another party, however, tried to justify this negligence of designating by providing evidence derived from the personal conduct of some Companions rather than others and then concluding that their conduct is reasonable evidence against all Muslims.

The authors of books of hadith,[1] history of Islam, and biography of the Holy Prophet (saw), written in the last days of the Umayyad reign (220/835) and the first days of the `Abbasid reign, could not write the truth, especially that which did not correspond with the personal whims of the ruling authorities. If one or two reference books distinctively demonstrate a historical event contradictory to the prevalent policy of the rulers, they should be given special attention.

1– The body of traditions concerning the Holy Prophet's words, deeds, and confirmations.

A truth-seeking researcher must investigate the serious issues using the scientific methodology, focusing on the nature of the circumstances in the age of the Holy Prophet (saw) and the most important incidents that took place in the last year of his life, and examine them with good reason.

The political situation inside and outside the Islamic state, just prior to the demise of the Holy Prophet (saw) required that he, obeying an order issued by God Almighty, should designate someone to succeed him as the next leader. The hypocrites, the Scripturists within the Islamic state and the Byzantine state, i.e., the Eastern Roman Empire, and the polytheistic powers, formed several hostile centers that threatened the very existence of Muslims.

It was indispensable for the Holy Prophet (saw) to prevent any sort of discrepancy or schism to take place within his community after his departure and guarantee Islamic unity by creating a strong fortress around the Muslim community. This was possible only if he designated a well-qualified person to be the next leader –a leader that would be able to prevent disunity, separation, discrepancy, and whimsical inconsistency among the individuals of this community.

In fact, to immunize the community against all inauspicious incidents and prevent those, disposed to indulge in personal fancies from demanding leadership, and consequently create contentions on the issue of caliphate, rulership, government, and political leadership the designation of the next leader was indispensable.

The Holy Prophet (saw) did act according to this necessity. The reason why the Holy Prophet (saw) placed the question

of his successor during the first days of the promulgation of Islam becomes clear. The Holy Prophet (saw) kept on repeating this decision all his life, up to his very last hours.

Yes, Indeed! The Holy Prophet (saw) designated a successor and referred to him decisively while launching Islam, throughout its journey, and in the last days of his lifetime. This is a fact believed by the Ahl al-Bayt (as) and other persons who did not sell their faith to the rulers despite all temptations and threats that rulers use in order to subjugate their people.

Here are some examples of the Holy Prophet's (saw) clear-cut statements designating Imam 'Ali (as) as his successor since the first days of Islam up to the last hours of his blessed lifetime:

Al-Tabari has reported the following:

> Ibn Humayd has reported on the authority of Salamah on the authority of Muhammad ibn Ishaq on the authority of `Abd al-Ghaffar ibn al-Qasim on the authority of al-Minhal ibn `Amr on the authority of 'Abdullah ibn Harith ibn Nawfal ibn al-Harith ibn `Abd al-Muttalib on the authority of Ibn `Abbas on the authority of 'Ali ibn Abi Talib who said:
>
> When this holy verse was revealed: *"And warn your nearest relations, (26:214)"* the Prophet (saw) called me. He then said, "'Ali, God Almighty has ordered me to warn my nearest relations, but I am depressed since I realize that they will answer me disdainfully whenever I call them to this matter. Hence, I tried to evade it until (Archangel) Gabriel came and

threatened my Lord's chastisement if I would not carry it out. Now, I ask you to prepare some food in which you should cook a leg of a sheep and prepare a bagful of milk. Then, invite the sons of `Abd al-Muttalib so that I can speak to them and convey this mission." I carried out the Prophet's (saw) orders completely and invited the sons of `Abd al-Muttalib who were about forty men. Abu Talib, Hamzah, al-`Abbas and Abu Lahab, the Prophet's (saw) uncles, were also invited. As they all were present, the Prophet (saw) asked me to serve them with the food I had prepared. With his teeth, he incised that piece of meat, threw its parts on the edges of the trencher, and said, "Here you are, in the Name of Allah." They all ate to their full. By Allah, Who grasps my soul, I swear, each one ate as much as I had cooked for them all. Then, the Prophet (saw) asked me to serve them with that milk. They all drank from that skinbag. I swear by Allah, each one drank a full bag of milk. As soon as the Prophet (saw) tried to speak, Abu Lahab interrupted and said, "See how your man casts witchcraft on you!" Therefore, they left before he could speak to them.

The next day, the Prophet (saw) said to me, "You saw how that man interrupted me, making them all leave before I could speak to them. Today, prepare food again as you did yesterday and invite them again." I did the same and invited them, and they came, ate and drank. The Prophet (saw) then spoke, 'O sons of `Abd al-Muttalib! By Allah, I do not know an Arab man who can bring to his people a matter better than what I am bringing to you. I am

> conveying to you the welfare of this world as well as the Hereafter. Almighty Allah has ordered me to invite you to this matter. Which one of you will support me in this affair so that he will be my brother, successor, and vicegerent amongst you?"
>
> They all refused to reply. I was the youngest, the most rheumatic, the most big-bellied, and the most thin-legged among them, but I spoke aloud, "I will, Prophet of God! I am ready to be your assistant in this."
>
> Upon hearing this, the Prophet (saw) put his arm around my shoulder and said, "This is my brother, successor, and vicegerent amongst you. Hence, you must listen to and obey him."
>
> Nevertheless, they left laughing at me and telling Abu Talib, "Well, he has ordered you to listen to and obey your son!"[1]

This tradition is known as hadith yawm al-dar (Tradition of the Day at the House) or hadith bad' al-da`wah (Tradition of the Beginning of the Promulgation) by exegetes of the Holy Qur'an, reporters of the Prophetic traditions, and writers of the history of Islam.[2]

1– Al-Tabari, *Tarikh al-Umam wa'l-Muluk* (*Tarikh al-Tabari*) 1:542-3; Ibn Sa`d, *al-Tabaqat al-Kubra* 1:187; Ibn al-Athir, *al-Kamil fi'l-Tarikh* 2:41-2; Ibn `Asakir, *Tarikh Madinat Dimashq* 42:46.

2– Al-Tabari, *Jami` al-Bayan* 19:149; Ibn Kathir, *Tafsir al-Qur'an al-`Azim* 3:364; Ibn Kathir, *al-Bidayah wa'l-Nihayah* 3:53; Ibn Abi 'l-Hadid, *Sharh Nahj al-Balaghah* 13:211.

The Holy Prophet (saw) did not stop mentioning his successor by name at the onset of Islam. On many occasions, and in different places and situations he reminded them all that the next leader and his successor was 'Ali the son of Abu Talib.

The most prominent of these occasions was the 18th day of Dhu ’l-Hijjah, 10/16 March 631, which is known as the Ghadir Khumm Day.

Within the following theses, I will describe this great historical event and reiterate the eloquent statement of the Prophet (saw) on that day.

FIRST THESIS

Incident of Ghadir

After ten years of his emigration from Mecca to Medina, i.e., 10 AH, the Holy Prophet (saw) decided to perform the Hajj pilgrimage. When he declared his intention openly, a great number of Muslims came to Medina to join him in this Hajj pilgrimage. This was the Farewell Pilgrimage (*hijjat al-wada`*), also called the Islamic Pilgrimage (*hijjat al-islam*), the Delivering Pilgrimage (*hijjat al-balagh*), the Perfect Pilgrimage (*hijjat al-kamal*), and the Complete Pilgrimage (*hijjat al-tamam*).[1] Since his emigration to the holy city of Medina, the Holy Prophet (saw) did not perform any Hajj pilgrimage except this one.

The Holy Prophet (saw) left Medina after having bathed himself and smeared his body with fragrance and ointment, walking and putting on two garments made in Suhar (northern Oman): an apron and a shirt. That was Saturday, and the last five or six nights of Dhu'l-Qa`dah. He also ordered his women to join him, riding on howdahs. The members of his household, as well as a majority of the Emigrants and Supporters,[2] Arab tribes,

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1– Al-Amini, *al-Ghadir* 1:9.

2– *Ansar*: The people of Medina who accepted Islam and received the Holy Prophet and the Meccan emigrants.

and ordinary people travelled with him.[1]

The people of Medina, meanwhile, were afflicted by either smallpox or measles, which prevented many of them from joining the Holy Prophet (saw); yet, they were nine thousand, one hundred and fourteen thousand, or one hundred and twenty thousand, or one hundred and twenty-four thousand, or even more. This is the number of those who performed this Hajj pilgrimage with the Holy Prophet (saw). In addition to these people, the people of Mecca and the people of Yemen who came with Imam 'Ali (as) and Abu Musa, performed the rituals of this Hajj pilgrimage with the Holy Prophet (saw).[2]

When the Holy Prophet (saw) completed the rituals of the Hajj, he, began the homeward journey accompanied by these groups of people. On Thursday, the 18th of Dhu 'l-Hijjah 10/16 March 632, he arrived at a spring, named Khumm, on the crossroads of al-Juhfah, where the paths taken by the people of Medina, Egypt, and Iraq branch out. At that very place, Gabriel (as), the trustworthy Archangel came to him carrying this holy verse from God the Almighty:

﴿يَٰٓأَيُّهَا ٱلرَّسُولُ بَلِّغۡ مَآ أُنزِلَ إِلَيۡكَ مِن رَّبِّكَۖ وَإِن لَّمۡ تَفۡعَلۡ

1– *Tarikh al-Ya`qubi* 2:109; Ibn Sa`d, *al-Tabaqat al-Kubra* 3:225 & 2:173; *Tarikh Ibn Khuldun* 2:582; al-Qastalani, *Irshad al-Sari* 6:492; al-Maqrizi, *Imta` al-Asma`*, pp. 510.
2– Al-Halabi, *al-Sirah al-Halabiyyah* 3:257; Sibt ibn al-Jawzi, *Tadhkirat al-Khawass*, pp. 30; Ahmad Zayni Dahlan, *al-Sirah al-Nabawiyyah* 2:143; Farid Wajdi, *Da'irat al-Ma`arif* 3:542.

فَمَا بَلَّغْتَ رِسَالَتَهُۥ ۚ وَٱللَّهُ يَعْصِمُكَ مِنَ ٱلنَّاسِ ۗ إِنَّ ٱللَّهَ لَا يَهْدِى ٱلْقَوْمَ ٱلْكَٰفِرِينَ ﴾

"O Messenger, deliver what has been revealed to you from your Lord. And if you do it not, then you have not delivered His message. And Allah will protect you from the people. Surely, Allah will not guide the unbelieving people." (5:67)

The first rows of people were close to al-Juhfah; therefore, the Holy Prophet (saw) ordered the advancing ones to come back and the last ones to stop where they had reached. There were five huge acacia trees close to each other there; so, the Holy Prophet (saw) ordered his companions to sweep the area under them. When the call (adhan) for the Midday (Zuhr) Prayer ended, the Holy Prophet (saw) stood under those trees and led a congregational prayer. It was so hot that people had to put a part of their garments under their foreheads and another part under their feet because of the scorching heat. A garment that was used as a shade was hung on one of these acacia trees so as to provide shade to the Holy Prophet (saw) against the heat of the sun. Upon completing his prayer, the Holy Prophet (saw) stood up to deliver a sermon in the middle of the people,[1] on a platform made of camel saddles.[2]

1– Al-Haythami, *Majma` al-Zawa'id* 9:106.

2– Al-Tha`alibi, *Thimar al-Qulub*, pp. 6636, No. 1068; al-Hakim al-NayshAbu ri, *al-Mustadrak `ala al-Sahihayn* 3:533.

Raising his voice so that everybody could hear him, the Holy Prophet (saw) said:

> All praise be to Allah, Whose aid we seek, in Whom we believe, in Whom we put our trust, and Whose protection we seek against the evils of our selves and the bad consequences of our evildoings. No one can ever guide to the true path one whom Allah has misled and no one can ever mislead one whom Allah guides to the truth. I bear witness that there is no god save Allah and that Muhammad is His servant and messenger. To begin with, O people! The All-subtle and All-aware God has informed me that no prophet would live more than half of the lifetime of the preceding prophet. I am now about to be called and so I will respond. I will be questioned and so will you all be. What will your reply be?

They all said, "We bear witness that you have conveyed the message, acted sincerely, and striven adequately. May Allah reward you with the best reward for this."

The Holy Prophet (saw) then asked,

> Do you not bear witness that there is no god save Allah, Muhammad is His servant and messenger, His Paradise is true, His Hellfire is true, death is true, the Hour (of Resurrection) will be coming; there is no doubt about it, and Allah will certainly resurrect those lying in graves?

They answered, "Yes, we do."

The Holy Prophet (saw) then said,

> O Allah, please bear witness.

He (saw) then asked,

> O people, can you hear?

"Yes, we can," they answered.

The Holy Prophet (saw) said,

> I will surely precede you to the Pond and you will follow me thereto. It is as wide as the distance between Sana'a (Yemen) and Bostra (Syria) and it has silver cups that are as numerous as the stars. Now, consider how you will follow me with regard to the two weighty things.

"O Allah's Messenger," someone called. "What are the two weighty things?"

Answering him, the Holy Prophet (saw) stated,

> The major weighty thing is the Book of Allah. One of its ends is in the Hand of Allah the Almighty and All-majestic and the other in your hands. So, hold fast to it lest you go astray. The minor weighty thing is my progeny. Verily, the All-subtle and All-aware Lord has informed me that these two would never separate from one another until they join me on the Pond. I also requested my Lord for both of them to keep on being so. Now, do not surpass them lest you perish, and do not lag behind them lest you perish again.

The Holy Prophet (saw) then took 'Ali's (as) arm and raised it up until the color of their armpits was seen by everybody clearly. He then asked,

> O people! Who has a greater claim on the faithful

believers than they have on themselves?

They all answered, "Allah and His Messenger know best."

The Holy Prophet (saw) maintained,

> Allah is verily my master, I am the master of the faithful believers, and I have a greater claim on them than they have on themselves. Verily, 'Ali is (now) the master of everyone who regards me as his master.

The Holy Prophet (saw) repeated this statement three times, or four times according to the tradition of Ahmad ibn Hanbal the founder of the Hanbali school of law.

The Holy Prophet (saw) then added,

> O Allah, (please do) support whoever supports 'Ali, incur the hostility of whoever incurs the hostility of 'Ali, bear love for whoever bears love for 'Ali, hate whoever hates 'Ali, give victory to whoever gives victory to 'Ali, disappoint whoever disappoints 'Ali, and make the truth turn to any side that 'Ali takes. Behold! The present must convey this to the absent.

Before the groups of people began to leave, Archangel Gabriel descended to the Holy Prophet (saw) carrying this holy verse:

﴿ ٱلْيَوْمَ أَكْمَلْتُ لَكُمْ دِينَكُمْ وَأَتْمَمْتُ عَلَيْكُمْ نِعْمَتِى وَرَضِيتُ لَكُمُ ٱلْإِسْلَـٰمَ دِينًا ﴾

"This day have I perfected for you your religion and completed My favor on you and chosen for you

Islam as a religion." (5:3)

Hence, the Holy Prophet (saw) announced,

> Allah the Most Great be praised for perfecting the religion, completing the grace, being pleased with my conveying the message, and the leadership of 'Ali after me.

People began to congratulate Imam 'Ali the Commander of the Faithful (as) for this position. Among the first Companions who congratulated Imam 'Ali (as) for this position were Abu Bakr and `Umar. Both of them said to 'Ali (as), "Congratulations! Congratulations to you, son of Abu Talib. You have thus come to be my master as well as the master of all believing men and women."

As for Ibn `Abbas, he declared, "By Allah, the obedience to this (man) has become incumbent upon these people who must thus bow their necks to it."

As for Hassan ibn Thabit, the poet, he asked the Holy Prophet (saw) to permit him to say a few poetic verses about 'Ali (as) in his presence. Permitting him, the Holy Prophet (saw) replied, "Say with the blessing of Allah." So, Hassan stood up and said, "O group of the chiefs of Quraysh, I follow this declaration with an effective testimony of Allah's Messenger about this leadership." He then said,

On the day of Ghadir, their Prophet called them

At Khumm. How great was the Prophet's call… etc.

This incident of Ghadir is unanimously agreed upon by all Muslims. There is no other place on the entire globe known to be the place where this incident of Ghadir took

place. Whenever the name of the Ghadir Day is heard, it is understood that this incident is intended. It is also known that this incident took place in that very place that is situated near al-Juhfah.

Finally, all explorers and scholars know of no other Ghadir than this place.[1]

1– Refer to 'Allamah al-Amini, *al-Ghadir*, 1:9-12.

SECOND THESIS

In the Mighty Book

God Almighty has willed that the tradition of Ghadir[1] should always remain fresh and the passage of time does not tire it. Therefore, He revealed a verse about it, which people recite in the morning and evening, to remind them of this incident. Here is that holy Qur'anic verse:

First Verse:

﴿ يَٰٓأَيُّهَا ٱلرَّسُولُ بَلِّغۡ مَآ أُنزِلَ إِلَيۡكَ مِن رَّبِّكَۖ وَإِن لَّمۡ تَفۡعَلۡ فَمَا بَلَّغۡتَ رِسَالَتَهُۥۚ وَٱللَّهُ يَعۡصِمُكَ مِنَ ٱلنَّاسِۗ إِنَّ ٱللَّهَ لَا يَهۡدِي ٱلۡقَوۡمَ ٱلۡكَٰفِرِينَ ﴾

> *"O Messenger, deliver what has been revealed to you from your Lord. And if you do it not, then you have not delivered His message. And Allah will protect you from the people. Surely, Allah will not guide the unbelieving people." (5:67)*

About thirty exegetes of the Holy Qur'an have stated that this holy Qur'anic verse was revealed at Ghadir. Although `Allamah al-Amini, in his book entitled al-Ghadir, has

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1– This thesis is quoted from the book of al-Ghadir by 'Allamah al-Amini, 1:214-223.

quoted the words of all these thirty scholars, we will hereinafter mention a few of these words as evidence only:

1) Al-Hafiz Abi-Hatam Abu Muhammad al-Hanzali al-Razi (d. 327/939): Through his own chain of authority, he reports Abu Sa`id al-Khudri to have said, "This Qur'anic verse was revealed to Allah's Messenger (saw) on that day at Ghadir Khumm concerning 'Ali ibn Abi-Talib.[1]

2) Abu Ishaq al-Tha`labi al-NayshAbu ri (d. 427/1036): In his book of tafsir (i.e. exegesis of the Holy Qur'an) entitled al-Kashf wa'l-Bayan, reports Muhammad ibn 'Ali al-Baqir (as) to have said, "This verse means: Convey what has been revealed to you from your Lord regarding the excellence of 'Ali (as). Hence, when the verse was received by him, the Holy Prophet (saw) took 'Ali by the arm and stated, ''Ali is now the master of everyone who has regarded me as his master… etc.'"[2]

3) Abu 'l-Hasan al-Wahidi al-NayshAbu ri (d. 568/1173): He reports Abu Sa`id al-Khidri to have said, "This verse was revealed on that day at Ghadir Khumm concerning 'Ali ibn Abi Talib (as)."[3]

4) Jalal al-Din al-Suyuti al-Shafi`i (d. 911/1506):

He says: Abu 'l-Shaykh has reported on the authority of al-Hasan (as) who quoted the Holy Prophet (saw) to have said, "God sent me to convey a message, but I felt myself

1– i.e. the Prophet's designation of 'Ali as the next leader.
2– This tradition is reported from him by Ibn al-Bitriq in his book entitled *al-`Umdah*, pp. 99-100, H. 132 and Ibn Shahrashub in his book entitled *Manaqib* 3:29.
3– Al-Wahidi, *Asbab al-Nuzul*, p. 135.

powerless to convey it, since I knew that the people would give the lie to me. So, God threatened me to convey it lest He would chastise me. He thus revealed to me this verse: *'O Messenger, deliver what has been revealed to you from your Lord… (5:67)*'"

`Abd ibn Humayd, Ibn Jarir, Ibn Abi-Hatam, and Abu 'l-Shaykh have reported on the authority of Mujahid who said: When this verse was revealed to the Holy Prophet (saw*): 'O Messenger, deliver what has been revealed to you from your Lord… (5:67)'* he said, "O Lord, I am only one man! What shall I do when people will help each other against me?" Hence, God revealed this part of the verse: 'And if you do it not, then you have not delivered His message.'

Ibn Abi-Hatam, Ibn Mardawayh, and Ibn `Asakir have reported the following from Abu Sa`id al-Khidri:

This verse was revealed to Allah's Messenger (saw) [in this explanatory form:] "O Messenger, deliver what has been revealed to you from your Lord that 'Ali (as) is the guardian-leader of the faithful believers. And if you do it not, then you have not delivered His message. And Allah will protect you from the people."[1]

Second Verse:

﴿ ٱلْيَوْمَ أَكْمَلْتُ لَكُمْ دِينَكُمْ وَأَتْمَمْتُ عَلَيْكُمْ نِعْمَتِى وَرَضِيتُ لَكُمُ ٱلْإِسْلَـٰمَ دِينًا ﴾

"This day have I perfected for you your religion and

1– Al-Suyuti, *al-Durr al-Manthur* 2:298.

completed My favor on you and chosen for you Islam as a religion." (5:3)

More than sixteen exegetes of the Holy Qur'an have reported that this holy Qur'anic verse was revealed at Ghadir Khumm, such as al-Hafiz Ibn Mardawayh al-Isfahani,[1] (d.410/1020) and al-Hafiz Abu Nu`aym al-Isfahani,[2] (d.430/1039).[3]

Third Verse:

﴿ سَأَلَ سَآئِلٌۢ بِعَذَابٍ وَاقِعٍ ۝١ لِّلْكَـٰفِرِينَ لَيْسَ لَهُۥ دَافِعٌ ۝٢ مِّنَ ٱللَّهِ ذِى ٱلْمَعَارِجِ ﴾

"A questioner questioned concerning the doom about to fall upon the disbelievers, which none can repel from Allah, Lord of the Ascending Stairway." (70:1-3)

More than thirty exegetes of the Holy Qur'an have stated that these three Qur'anic verses were revealed to express one of the incidents that took place on the Ghadir Day when the Holy Prophet (saw) designated Imam 'Ali (as) to succeed him as the next leader of the Muslim community. Besides, all Shi`ites agree unanimously that the aforementioned verses were revealed at Ghadir concerning the leadership of `Ali (as).[4]

1– Ibn Kathir, *Tafsir al-Qur'an al-`Azim* 2:14.
2– Abu Nu`aym al-Isfahani, *Ma Nazala Min al-Qur'an*, pp. 232.
3– 'Allamah al-Amini, *al-Ghadir* 1:230-234.
4– 'Allamah al-Amini, *al-Ghadir* 1:214-240; Ja`far al-Subhani, *Adwa'un `ala `aqa'id al-Shi`ah al-Imamiyyah*, pp. 135-139; Sayyid 'Ali al-Milani, *Hadith al-Ghadir*, pp. 17-27.

THIRD THESIS

Uninterrupted Reporting of the Tradition of Ghadir

First: Scholars of the various Muslim sects confess that the tradition of Ghadir is uninterruptedly reported from the Holy Prophet (saw). The following list comprises the names of some of these scholars:

1) Jalal ud-Din al-Suyuti, a scholar of the Shafi`i jurisprudential school, in his two books entitled al-Fawa'id al-Mutakathirah fi'l-Akhbar al-Mutawatirah and al-Azhar al-Mutanathirah fi'l-Akhbar al-Mutawatirah: In his book entitled Sharh al-Jami` al-Saghir 3:360, `Allamah al-`Azizi has quoted the words of al-Suyuti about the uninterruptability (i.e. tawatur) of the tradition of Ghadir.

2) Mulla 'Ali al-Qari, a scholar of the Hanafi jurisprudential school, in his book entitled al-Mirqat fi Sharh al-Mishkat 5:568.

3) Jamal ud-Din `Ata'ullah ibn Fadlullah al-Shirazi in his book entitled al-Arba`in (manuscript).

4) Al-Mannawi, a scholar of the Shafi`i jurisprudential school, in his book entitled al-Taysir fi Sharh al-Jami` al-Saghir 2:442.

5) Muhammad ibn Isma`il al-Yamani al-San`ani (of Sana'a, Yemen) in his book entitled al-Rawdah al-Nadiyyah.

6) Shaykh 'Abdullah al-Shafi`i in his book entitled al-Arba`in.

7) Shaykh Diya' al-Din al-Muqbili in his book entitled al-Abhath al-Musaddidah fi al-Funun al-Muta`addidah.

8) Ibn Kathir al-Dimashqi (of Damascus) in his book on history (i.e. Tarikh Ibn Kathir): Chapter: Biography of Muhammad ibn Jarir al-Tabari.

9) Abu 'Abdullah al-Hafiz al-Dhahabi. His statement about the uninterrupted reporting of the tradition of Ghadir has been quoted by Ibn Kathir in his book on history (Tarikh) 5:213-4.

10) Al-Hafiz Ibn al-Jazari. His statement about the uninterrupted reporting of the tradition of Ghadir has been quoted in his book entitled Asna al-Matalib fi Manaqib 'Ali ibn Abi-Talib. Commenting on the tradition involved, he says,

> This tradition is classified as hasan (i.e. a tradition that meets all the qualifications of authenticity; yet, one of the reporters is weak) from this side, but sahih (authentic) from many other sides. It is also uninterruptedly reported from 'Ali the Commander of the Faithful (as) and from the Holy Prophet (saw), since it has been reported by a great number of reporters. Therefore, the efforts of those who have attempted to deem it weak are worthless, since they lack enough skillfulness in this field of knowledge.

Second: Through numerous ways of narration, a large number of grand traditionists (i.e. narrators of traditions) have reported the tradition of Ghadir. Some details are as follows:

1) Ahmad ibn Hanbal has reported the tradition through forty ways of narration.

2) Ibn Jarir al-Tabari has reported it through seventy-two ways of narration.

3) Al-Jazari al-Muqri has reported it through eighty ways of narration.

4) Ibn `Uqdah has reported it through one hundred and five ways of narration.

5) Abu Sa`id al-Sijistani has reported it through one hundred and twenty ways of narration.

6) Abu Bakr al-Ju`abi has reported it through one hundred and twenty-five ways of narration.

7) Muhammad al-Yamani has reported it through one hundred and fifty ways of narration.

8) In his book entitled al-Manaqib, pp. 108 (manuscript), Shaykh 'Abdullah al-Shafi`i says,

> This report (i.e. the tradition of Ghadir) has exceeded the limits of uninterruptability in such a way that no other report has ever had so many ways of narration.

Shaykh Abu Ta-Talib al-Tabrizi, in his book entitled Spurious Arguments about the Shi'a, has listed two hundred and fifty-six chains of authority reporting this tradition, all from books written by Sunni scholars.[1]

1– Abu Talib al-Tabrizi, *Spurious Arguments about the Shi`ah*, pp. 51-67.

Third: The Companions (*sahabah*), their followers (tabi`un), and the next generation used the tradition of Ghadir as an argument in their discourses. The names of some of these personalities are listed as follows:

1) Imam 'Ali, the Commander of the Faithful (as), used the tradition of Ghadir as his argument on many occasions, such as the Shura Day,[1] during the reign of `Uthman ibn `Affan,[2] on the day when he delivered his famous argumentative sermon in the courtyard of al-Kufah Mosque;[3] on the day of the Battle of the Camel;[4] the episode of the riders[5] in al-Kufah;[6] and on the day of the Battle of Siffin.[7]

2) Lady Fatimah al-Zahra' (as) the daughter of the Holy Prophet (saw) used the tradition of Ghadir as an argument.[8]

1– See al-Hamawini al-Shafi`i, *Fara'id al-Simtayn* 1:319 Chapter Fifty Eight.
2– *Ibid*. 1:312.
3– Al-Khawarizmi, *Manaqib*, pp. 157.
4– *Ibid.* pp. 182.
5– A number of riders came to Imam 'Ali (as) and greeted him, saying, "Peace be upon you, our master!" "How can I be your master while I do not even know you?" Imam 'Ali (as) asked. They answered, "On that day in Ghadir Khumm, we have heard the Messenger of God saying, ''Ali is now the master of every one who has regarded me as his master.'" [*translator*]
6– Ahmad ibn Hanbal, *al-Musnad* 5:419.
7– The book of Sulaym ibn Qays, pp. 295.
8– al-Jazari al-Miqari al-Shafi`i, *Asna al-Matalib*, pp. 49.

3) Imam al-Hasan ibn 'Ali al-Mujataba the grandson of the Holy Prophet (saw) used the tradition of Ghadir as an argument.[1]

4) Imam al-Husayn ibn 'Ali the martyr of Karbala' and the grandson of the Holy Prophet (saw) used the tradition of Ghadir as an argument.[2]

5) 'Abdullah ibn Ja`far used the tradition of Ghadir in his argument against Mu'awiyah.

6) `Amr ibn al-`As used the tradition of Ghadir in his argument against Mu'awiyah.

7) `Ammar ibn Yasir used the tradition of Ghadir in his argumentative words during the Battle of Siffin.

8) Al-Asbagh ibn Nubatah used the tradition of Ghadir in his argument in one of the sessions held by Mu'awiyah.

9) A young man used this tradition as his argument against Abu Hurayrah in al-Kufah.[3]

10) Qays ibn `Abadah used the tradition as argument against Mu'awiyah.[4]

11) `Umar ibn `Abd al-`Aziz used this tradition as an argument in one of his speeches.[5]

1– Al-Qanaduzi al-Hanafi, *Yanabi` al-Mawaddah* 3:369.
2– The book of Sulaym ibn Qays, pp. 320.
3– Al-Haythami, *Majma` al-Zawa'id* 9:105.
4– The book of Sulaym ibn Qays, pp. 313.
5– Ibn `Asakir, *Tarikh Madinat Dimashq* 45:344.

12) Al-Ma'mun the `Abbasid ruler used this tradition as an argument against the jurisprudents.[1]

1– Ibn `Abd-Rabbih al-Andalusi, *al-`Iqd al-Farid* 5:317-27. See also 'Allamah al-Amini, *al-Ghadir* 10:212.

FOURTH THESIS

The Word '*Mawla*' in Language and Exegesis

The two Arabic words mawla and wali are adjectives derived from the noun wilayah, which, along with all of its derivatives, means assuming an authority and putting it into effect. Supporting this meaning, al-Jawhari the author of the Arabic-Arabic Dictionary of al-Sihah states that the word wilayah along with all of its derivatives means assuming an authority.[1]

Al-Irbili in his book entitled al-Nihayah fi Gharib al-Hadith says, "The word wilayah sensibly refers to management, ability, and putting into action… mawla or wali is the one who assumes an authority… `Umar said to 'Ali, 'You have come to be the mawla of all believers.' That is; you are the wali (leader) of all believers."[2]

As for the author of Lisan al-`Arab, he says, "Sibawayh, an Arab linguist, says that the word wilayah is a noun representing whatever you assume and undertake. The infinitive is however walayah. The wali of an orphan is the custodian who manages the orphan's affairs and meets all his needs. The wali of [an unmarried] woman is the person

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1– Al-Jawhari, *al-Sihah* 6:2529: Item: *w-l-y*.

2– Al-Arbali, *al-Nihayah fi Gharib al-Hadith* 5:227-8: Idem, s.v. *w-l-a.*

who has the right to manage her matrimonial contract on behalf of her as a condition of the validity of such contracts. In this respect, a hadith reads, 'The matrimonial contract of any woman who has been married before obtaining the permission of her mawla is invalid.' According to another form of reporting this saying, the word wali –which stands for the one who is in charge of managing the affairs of a woman – replaced the word mawla. To conclude, the word, wali, actually stands for one who practically assumes an authority.

To explain, the word rajul (man) is generally used to describe certain persons though they are in fact men. Likewise, the word mawla is used to mean the lord, because he is the one who manages the affairs of those under his control. It is also used to mean the master, since he manages the affairs of his slaves and is used to mean the slave because he manages the affairs needed by the master. Similarly, it is used to denote neighbors, cousins, allies, and sons-in-law, because they assume the mission of supporting their friends when they need their support. In conclusion, the word mawla is a common meaningful expression.

Accordingly, the Holy Prophet's (saw) expression ''Ali is now the master of everyone who regards me as his master,' comes to mean: as for any one whose affairs have been managed by me, 'Ali from now on is the one to assume authority and manage his/her affairs.

Of course, this is a clear-cut indication of Imam 'Ali's (as) next leadership, headship, and management of the affairs of the Muslim nation. In other words, since the Holy Prophet (saw) was the leader, guardian, authority, and

manager of this nation and its affairs, Imam 'Ali (as) was charged with the same general leadership, guardianship, absolute authority, and management over the Muslim community in his capacity as the successor of the Holy Prophet (saw). This result is an obvious conclusion of master Arab linguists and lexicographers.

However, even if it is stubbornly argued that the word mawla has many meanings and involves a common verbal expression, it is still undoubted that the most suitable meaning of the word used by the Holy Prophet (saw) in the abovementioned tradition is: leadership, management of the affairs of the Muslim community, and complete headship.

In his book entitled Tafsir al-Mushkil fi'l-Qur'an, al-Anbari states that the Arabic words mawla and wali stand for the worthiest and most entitled to an authority.[1]

In his famous book of tafsir (29:227, published in Egypt), al-Fakhr al-Razi quotes al-Zajjaj and al-Farra', two Arab master linguistics, as saying that the word mawla usually comes to mean the worthiest to assume a position of authority. Abu 'l-`Abbas al-Mubarrad, a famous master linguist, is reported to have explained the word wali as the worthiest and most entitled to an office.

In his book of tafsir (4:66, published in Egypt), al-Zamakhshari says, "The word mawla actually means the worthiest, the most deserving."

1– Sharif al-Murtada, *al-Shafi fi'l-Imamah* 2:272; *al-`Umdah*, pp. 113.

If the word mawla in its reality means the worthiest, it is then necessary to adopt this very meaning rather than any other one, because there is no indication of any other meaning in the text (i.e. the Holy Prophet's (saw) statement) in which this word was mentioned.

`Allamah al-Amini, followed by Shaykh Abu Ta-Talib al-Tabrizi, has mentioned many other points of evidence. However, we shun referring to these points for fear of filling many more pages.[1]

1– For further details, refer to 'Allamah al-Amini, *al-Ghadir*, pp. 340-371; Abu Talib al-Tabrizi, *Spurious Arguments about the Shi`ah*, pp. 78-102.

FIFTH THESIS

The Ghadir Feast in the History of Islam

It indeed seems to be the Divine will that the event of Ghadir shines as an active historical fact that provokes Muslim writers in every age and time to write about this topic and touch on it from various angles; such as, exegesis of the Holy Qur'an, history of Islam, Prophetic traditions and doctrine. Moreover, this issue has been the topic of teaching sessions and poetic festivals, since it is undoubtedly considered as one of the excellences of Imam 'Ali (as).

Seldom has any event throughout the history of mankind acquired such interest as the event of Ghadir. Seldom has any incident attracted the attention of such various classes of scholars as traditionists, exegetes, theologians, philosophers, poets, men of letters, writers, orators, biographers, and historians like the incident of Ghadir. Besides, scholars of such various fields of knowledge have seldom cared for an incident like the incident of Ghadir.

One of the significant reasons for the immortality of this incident is that two holy Qur'anic verses[1] were revealed on the subject of this incident; therefore, as long as the Holy

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1– Surat al-Ma'idah (No. 3), verses 3 & 67 and Surat al-Ma`arij (No. 70) verses 1-3.

Qur'an is incessantly recited day and night, this incident will remain alive.

In the past ages, the members of the Muslim community in general, and the followers of the Ahl al-Bayt (as) in particular, used to celebrate the 18th day of Dhu 'l-Hijjah as a major feast day for Muslims who were familiar with the Ghadir Feast Day. Mentioning the biography of al-Musta`li the son of al-Mustansir the `Abbasid ruler, Ibn Khullakan says, "Allegiance was sworn to him as caliph on the Ghadir day, the 18th of Dhu 'l-Hijjah, 487/1094."[1]

Mentioning the biography of Mustansir-bi'llah al-`Ubaydi, the writer says, "He died on a Thursday night, twelve nights before the end of the month of Dhu 'l-Hijjah 487/December 1094." Of course, this means that he died on the Ghadir Feast Night, which is the 18th night of Dhu 'l-Hijjah, the day celebrated as the Ghadir Khumm Day.[2]

As for Abu Rayhan al-Bayruni, he considered the anniversary of the incident of Ghadir to be one of the feasts celebrated by Muslims.[3]

Abu Hurayrah is reported to have said, "Whoever observes fasting on the 18th of Dhu 'l-Hijjah, God will record for him/her the reward of a sixty-month (or a sixty-year) fast. This day is the Ghadir Khumm day when the Prophet (saw) took 'Ali (as) by the arm and declared, 'This, 'Ali, is now the master of everyone who has regarded me as his master.

1– Ibn Khullakan, *Wafiyyat al-A`yan* 1:60.
2– Ibid.
3– Abu Rayhan al-Biruni, *al-Āthar al-Baqiyah*, pp. 395; 'Allamah al-Amini, *al-Ghadir* 1:267.

O Allah, (please) support whoever supports 'Ali, incur the hostility of whoever incurs the hostility of 'Ali, and give victory to whoever gives victory to 'Ali.' There, `Umar ibn al-Khattab said to 'Ali, 'Congratulations! Congratulations to you, son of Abu Talib! You have thus come to be my master as well as the master of all Muslims.'"[1]

Similarly, al-Tha`alibi considered the Ghadir night to be one of the famously recognized nights by Muslims.[2]

The celebration of this Islamic feast day goes back to the day of the occasion itself; i.e. the 18th of Dhu 'l-Hijjah, AH 10. The Holy Prophet (saw), on this day, ordered the Emigrants and the Supporters, and even his wives and women to visit 'Ali (as) and offer (formal) congratulations to him on his distinctive excellence and leading position.

In this regard, Zayd ibn Arqam is reported to have said, "The first to shake hands with the Prophet (saw) and 'Ali (as) -on the occasion of Ghadir - were Abu Bakr, `Umar, `Uthman, Talhah, and Zubayr, followed by the other Emigrants, Supporters, and the other people."[3]

The fact, that it was reported by one hundred and ten Companions,[4] suffices as proof of the significance of this

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1– Al-Khatib al-Baghdadi, *Tarikh Baghdad* 8:290; Ibn `Asakir, *Tarikh Madinat Dimashq* 2:75, 575-577.
2– Al-Tha`alibi, *Thimar al-Qulub*, pp. 551.
3– See 'Allamah al-Amini, *al-Ghadir* 1:270. This item is reported from Ahmad ibn Muhammad al-Tabari, famously known as al-Khalili in the book entitled *Manaqib 'Ali ibn Abi-Talib*.
4– 'Allamah al-Amini, *al-Ghadir* 1:61 & 314.

historical event. However, this does not mean that the incident was reported by these Companions only from among the huge multitude of Muslims who witnessed it; rather, it means that the names of these persons have been mentioned in the books of Prophetic traditions and the history of Islam.

In the second century of Hegira, which is known as the age of the Companions' followers (i.e. tabi`un), this tradition was reported by eighty nine of these followers.

In the following centuries, a great number of master scholars and founders of the various Muslim jurisprudential schools declared this tradition to be authentic (sahih) and as uninterruptedly reported (mutawatir) as has been previously discussed.[1]

1– The grand Muslim historian Abu Ja`far al-Tabari has compiled a book on this topic, which he entitled *al-Wilayah fi Tariq Hadith al-Ghadir*. In this book, he reported the tradition of Ghadir through more than seventy chains of authority all of which end with the Holy Prophet s(saw). As for Ibn `Uqdah, he reported this tradition, in his thesis entitled *al-Wilayah*, through one hundred and five chains of authority. For further details, refer to Ibn Shahrashub, *Manaqib Āli Abi-Talib*, 2:228. Abu Bakr Muhammad ibn `Umar al-Baghdadi, famously known as al-Jam`ani, reported the same tradition through twenty-five chains of authority.

SIXTH THESIS

Tradition of Ghadir is uninterpretable

Some people claim that the Prophet (saw), by gathering Muslims on that day and declaring these words about 'Ali (as) in Ghadir Khumm, did not intend to designate him as the leader of Muslims and the successor who should rule after him; rather, he only wanted to make clear the virtue and rank of 'Ali (as). This is so because the Arabic word wali is also used to mean supporter, friend, and beloved. Consequently, nothing makes it inevitably mean leader, ruler, and assumer of the affairs of Muslims!

However, with reference to the circumstances and surroundings of this historical event, especially the exceptional deeds of the Holy Prophet (saw), such interpretations seem to contradict its purpose.

To explain: the Holy Prophet (saw) ordered thousands of Muslims to stop advancing and halt under the burning sun at the hottest hour of the day. He ordered those who had advanced to come back and those who lagged behind to come forward. He then ordered the present ones to convey his statement to the absent ones. He announced that he would soon depart from this world; so he asked them all to bear witness that they believed in Allah as the One and Only Lord; accept that the message he had conveyed to them was issued by Allah; believe that they will be resurrected after death for judgment; and, that he had a greater claim on them than they had on themselves. All these matters correspond to

no other thing than declaring a very important statement. In plainer words, it requires no effort to understand that such preparations and arrangements ordered by the Prophet (saw) must have been intended for stating an extremely important issue that was inseparably linked to the destiny of the Muslim nation. Besides, God the All-glorified had already warned the Prophet (saw) that if he would not convey this special message, it would be considered that he had not conveyed the message at all, after the efforts exerted by the Holy Prophet (saw) day and night for twenty three years.

What then was the very important issue that God the Almighty promised to protect the Prophet (saw) against people after he would deliver it? Was there any danger expected after conveying concepts that had nothing to do with the serious issue of leadership for which the Prophet (saw) needed protection against the people? Who were those people from whom the Holy Prophet (saw) required the protection of God the All-exalted after he would convey what he was ordered to convey?

Thus can we realize that any attempt to interpret the meaning of this unmistakable tradition into other meanings than what it openly entails aims at nothing but escaping the inclusive argument that has been highlighted by the Holy Prophet (saw) in simple words as regards designating Imam 'Ali (as) as the next leader of the Muslim nation, his successor. It is also clearly understandable that the Holy Prophet (saw) did not leave the serious issue of next leadership unsolved. Seizing the historical opportunity of the crowds that gathered on that day in Ghadir Khumm, the Holy Prophet (saw) did not

neglect identifying who would hold the great political position of leading the Muslim nation after him.

What further proves the falsity and invalidity of such attempts to misinterpret the Holy Prophet's words on the Ghadir day is the fact that such grand Companions like Abu Bakr, `Umar, Hassan ibn Thabit, and others who were present there understood completely what the Holy Prophet (saw) had meant. In other words, they understood that the Holy Prophet (saw) was talking about the issue of the next leadership of the Muslim community and the worthiest person to assume the public affairs of the nation. Moreover, the practical actions of these personalities, immediately after the Holy Prophet's (saw) declaration, prove this fact, such as their offering congratulations to Imam 'Ali (as) for assuming that position.

The leadership of a nation plays a vital role in the process of self-perfection. The more a nation follows its divinely-designated leader the more progress it achieves and the more cohesive its parts become. On the other hand, a nation that refrains from following their true leader will find itself powerless, disunited, and fallen apart.

We beseech Allah the All-glorious to help us hold fast to his covenant of 'There is no god but Allah and Muhammad is the messenger of Allah,' in such a united and tenacious manner that we become a firm, compact wall in the face of all the colonialists, who are still causing mischief in the land. We also beseech Him to grant us invigorated victory over the usurping Zionists, so that we can drive them out of the sacred lands of Islam and liberate al-Quds, the Islamic center. Verily, Allah is the patron of all victory.

All praise is due to Allah the Lord of the worlds.

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